

REMARKS

The rejection to Claims 11 and 12 have been addressed above. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Likewise, reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of Claims 9, 10, 12 and 14-16 as being anticipated by Kashiwamura et al. under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and of Claims 11, 13 and 17-20 as being unpatentable over Kashiwamura et al. in view of Thomas et al. under U.S.C. §103(a), which rejections are traversed.

The Kashiwamura et al. vehicle pneumatically-controlled seat employs pressurizable elements 1 through 10 that occupy relatively large areas located at specific places and are not in any sense punctiform elements that are distributed over substantially the entire seating surface in the manner set forth in amended Claim 9. That is, the elements in the Kashiwamura et al. seat are limited to places such as the shoulders, lumbar region, sides and thigh. Applicants note that this known arrangement is not a contour adjusting arrangement but a mechanism for supporting vehicle occupants as lateral and longitudinal accelerations in addition to vehicle inclination.

And the Thomas et al. massager cushioning device is directed only to a massaging device, not a contouring device. Even as to the massaging functionality of the reference, however, two of the glands or elements must

always be connected to the alternation inflation and deflation. In other words, the Thomas et al. patent does not teach individual pressurization.

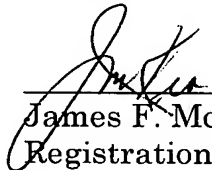
Accordingly, early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #095309.56013US).

Respectfully submitted,

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